

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO NIACT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP (MOFFETT, TOBY; MILLER, GEORGE; HARKIN, TOM)

SUBJECT: CODEL MOFFETT

1. FURTHER TO SEPARATE CABLES CONTAINING PRESS RELEASES BY CODEL, FOLLOWING IS SU0STANCE OF THEIR REMARKS AT THEIR MARCH 17 PRESS CONFERENCE. THESE WERE TAKEN FROM NOTES AND ACCORDINGLY MAY NOT REFLECT EXACT QUOTES AS THEY WILL APPEAR IN THE TRANSCRIPT.

2. AS A GENERAL THEME, MOFFETT ASSESSED THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN CHILE AS DEPLORABLE. ON REFLECTION, HE SAID HE FOUND IT A SAD EXPERIENCE TO SEE ONE OF THE OLDEST DEMOCRACIES IN LATIN AMERICA BEING RUN BY A MILITARY JUNTA AND TO HEAR THE COUNTLESS TALES OF TORTURE. IT WAS CLEAR TO HIM THIS IS A REGIME RUN BY FOUR MEN AND IN NO WAY A GOVERNMENT OF LAWS. CHILEANS CONTINUE TO BE TAKEN AWAY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, WITHOUT ANYONE BEING INFORMED, WITH NO TRIAL, AND NO APPEAL. HE UNDERLINED THAT THE NUMBER ONE PLEA THEY GOT FROM THE GROUPS TO WHICH THEY SPOKE WAS THAT THERE BE A STRONG U.S. POSITION THAT SUCH A SITUATION SHOULD NO LONGER CONTINUE IN CHILE. HE SAID THIS IS TACITLY UNCLASSIFIED

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MISSING BECAUSE OF THE USG'S CONTINUED AID TO THE PINOCHET

REGIME. MOFFETT SAID THEIR VIEW WAS THAT PRESENT AID POLICY CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE. HE FELT TAT THE U.S. HAS A STRONG SUPPORTING ROLE WITH RESPECT TO THE GOC, NOT ONLY THROUGH AID BUT IN SUCH THINGS AS THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS. CONSEQUENTLY, HE URGED THE CUTOFF OF ASSISTANCE TO CHILE, AND TOOK PARTICULAR FAVORABLE NOTE OF THE KENNEDY AMENDMENT. HE SAID THEY HAD TALKED TO CHAIRMAN MORGAN, FASCELL AND ZABLOCKI IN THIS REGARD. MORGAN WAS NOT PREPARED AT THE MOMENT TO AGREE TO THE IDEA OF A CUTOFF AS REFLECTED IN THE KENNEDY AMENDMENT. NEITHER DID MORGAN SAY WHAT POSITION HE PLANNED TO TAKE. NOR DID ZABLOCKI. MOFFETT ADMITTED THAT THE HOUSE VOTE HAD PUT THOSE IN SUPPORT OF THE KENNEDY AMENDMENT IN A DIFFICULT POSITION. HE THOUGHT THE UPSHOT MIGHT BE COMPROMISE LANGUAGE IN CONFERENCE.

3. MILLER DESCRIBED THE HOUSE VOTE ON MILITARY AID TO CHILE AS BEING BEHIND THE URGENCY OF THEIR TRIP. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE HOUSE VOTE WAS BASED ON INCOMPLETE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE CONGRESS WHICH HAD BEEN COLLECTED THROUGH FORMAL CHANNELS. AS A RESULT OF THEIR TRIP, THEY WERE BRINGING FRESH KNOWLEDGE TO THEIR COLLEAGUES. HE THOUGHT THE HOUSE WOULD BE IMPRESSED WITH WHAT THEY HAD LEARNED AND WITH WHOM THEY HAD TALKED IN CHILE.

4. WITH REGARD TO THE QUESTION OF HOW THEY GOT AROUND CHILE SO EASILY AND WHY THE GOC DID NOT HIDE ITS SINS, MOFFETT OBSERVED THIS IS WHY THEY HAD REFUSED TO LET THE U.S. EMBASSY OR THE GOC DOMINATE THEIR TIME. HE QUOTED THE EMBASSY AS SAYING THAT CODEL SHOULD NOTE THE PEACE AND TRANQUILITY IN THE STREETS OF SANTIAGO AS AN INDICATION OF THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY. HE OBSERVED THIS IS NOT THE MEASURE OF A DEMOCRACY; WHAT IS HAPPENING OFF THE STREETS IS. MOFFETT ADDED THAT THE GOC DOES NOT ADMIT THE EXISTENCE OF CERTAIN PRISONS OR THAT ANYTHING GOES ON BEHIND CERTAIN WALLS. IN RESPONSE TO ANOTHER QUESTION, MOFFETT ALSO SAID THAT THE EMBASSY HAD BRAGGED ABOUT WHAT A GOOD JOB THE GOC HAD DONE IN INTERNAL SECURITY.

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5. FOR IS PART, HARKIN ALSO STRUCK A SOMBER TONE. THERE IS SOMETHING NEW IN CHILE, HE SAID: FEAR; FEAR OF BEING ARRESTED. HE SAW THE SAME THING IN SAIGON, BUT THERE, AT LEAST, THERE WAS THE EXCUSE OF A WAR. THE EXISTENCE OF TIGER CAGES WERE DENIED IN SAIGON. NOW THERE IS DENIAL THAT ANYTHING GOES ON IN VILLA GRIMALDI. HE DESCRIBED TAKING A CAB WITH JOE ELDRIDGE TO VILLA GRIMALDI, FOLLOWING ANOTHER CAR INSIDE THE COMPOUND, AND WITHIN HALF A MINUTE

BEING EXPELLED BY HOODISH, SEEDY, ARMED PLAINCLOTHESMEN.

6. ASKED WHETHER THEY FELT PARTICIPATION OF SECRETARY KISSINGER AT THE OASGA SIGNIFIED APPROVAL OF THE PINOCHET REGIME, THEY SAID YES. THEY THOUGHT THAT IF THE SECRETARY HAD TO GO TO SANTIAGO IT WOULD BE WELL THAT HE VISIT THE PRISONS AND CONTACT THE SAME SORT OF PEOPLE CODEL HAD MET TO GET A TRUE FEELING FOR THE CHILEAN SCENE.

7. RETURNING TO THE MATTER OF U.S. BILATERAL ASSISTANCE, THEY THOUGHT THE ECONOMIC AID PROGRAM NEEDED REVAMPING. THEY CITED FOOD FOR PEACE AS AN EXAMPLE. THEY EMPHASIZED THAT TITLE II FOOD IS HANDLED BY VOLUNTARY AGENCIES. AND THEY COULD SEE NO WAY THIS FOOD COULD BE DENIED TO THE POOR PEOPLE WITH WHOM THEY MET. RATHER, THEY THOUGHT MORE TITLE II SHOULD GO TO CHILE. SINCE TITLE I ASSISTANCE DOES NOT GO TO THE POOR, THEY SUGGESTED THAT MUCH OF THIS MONEY COULD BE SWITCHED INTO TITLE II EFFORTS. WITH REFERENCE TO OTHER BILATERAL AID, THEY BELIEVED THE USG WAS PLAYING A CONSIDERABLE ROLE IN SHORING UP THE GOC AND THAT MUCH OF THIS COULD BE ELIMINATED. THE KENNEDY AMENDMENT RESPONDED TO THE MILITARY ASPECT. WITH REFERENCE TO OPIC, MILLER SAID CHILE IS SEEKING TO ATTRACT CAPITAL AND OPIC IS A GOOD VEHICLE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS. HE BELIEVED ANY OPIC AGREEMENT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS DIRECT U.S. AID. HE DESCRIBED OPIC AS "ANTSY" ABOUT SUPPORTING INVESTMENT IN CHILE. THEY ALSO THOUGHT THE USG SHOULD TAKE A FIFMER ROLE AGAINST CHILE WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS. MOFFETT SAID THAT THEY PLANNED TO MEET WITH U.S. REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE ENTITIES ABOUT TAKING A MORE NEGATIVE POSITION ON THE PINOCHET REGIME. HE OBSERVED THAT EVEN THE U.S. EMBASSY BELIEVED THAT CONGRESSIONAL ACTION WAS PROVING EFFECTIVE IN GETTING THE GOVERNMENT TO EASE UP

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ON ITS INTERNAL SECURITY PRACTICES.

8. MOFFETT ALSO SOUGHT TO EXPLAIN AP STORY THAT THEY WERE DISCOURTEOUS TO GOC OFFICIALS. HE SAID THE GROUP WAS PLEASED AT WHOM THEY WERE ABLE TO SEE. THEY HAD ASKED FOR AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR ON THEIR DAY OF ARRIVAL. THEY HAD INQUIRED IN SUCCEEDING DAYS ABOUT THIS POSSIBILITY. NOTHING OCCURRED UNTIL THE DAY THEY WERE TO DEPART CHILE. ON THAT DAY THEY HAD A LUNCHEON WITH FREI AND WERE LATER TO MEET WITH THE CARDINAL. IN THIS CONTEXT THEY WERE NOTIFIED THEY WERE TO MEET THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR WITH THREE HOURS' NOTICE. UNDERSTANDABLY, GIVEN THEIR OTHER COMMITMENTS, THEY WERE UNABLE TO MAKE THIS APPOINTMENT. SUBSEQUENTLY, THEY WERE INFORMED THE EMBASSY WAS UPSET OVER A CALL BY INTERIOR AT CODEL'S BEING

UNABLE TO SEE THE MINISTER. ON THE BASIS OF THE EMBASSY CALL TO THEM, THEY PHONED THE MINISTER TO EXPLAIN WHY THEY DID NOT MAKE THE MEETING. THEY WERE TOLD BY OTHER GOC OFFICIALS THERE WAS NO REAL PROBLEM. THEY ASSESSED THAT THE COMPLAINTS SENT THE U.S. EMBASSY WERE A GOC SMOKE SCREEN IN ANTICIPATION THAT THEY WERE GOING TO BE CRITICAL OF THE GOVERNMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS. THEY HAD ANTICIPATED THIS POSITION IN THEIR CONVERSATION WITH GENERAL LEIGH.

9. THEY ALSO SAID THEY HAD MET WITH MANY GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING FREI. THEY QUOTED HIM AS STATING THAT GENERALLY THE MILITARY REGIME WAS WORSE THAN THE EX-PRESIDENT EXPECTED IT TO BE. MOFFETT SAID THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WERE BEARING THE BRUNT OF GOVERNMENT REPRESSION. HE CONTINUED THAT MANY OF THOSE WHO ACQUIESCED TO THE COUP WERE NOW HAVING SECOND THOUGHT. MANY HAD SUPPORTED THE COUP. THESE INCLUDED FREI AND THE CHURCH BECAUSE THEY FELT THE ALLENDE ADMINISTRATION WAS SO BAD. THE PROBLEM WAS THEY NEVER EXPECTED THAT THE MILITARY WOULD DELAY IN TURNING THE GOVERNMENT BACK INTO CIVILIAN HANDS.

10. THEY REFERRED TO THEIR PRISON VISITS FACILITATED BY THE GOC. ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THEY HAD ENCOUNTERED ANY U.S. CITIZENS IN THE PRISONS, THEY REFERRED TO JOHN CERRETTI WHO, THEY SAID, HAD BEEN PICKED UP FOR CARRYING LSD. THEY EXPLAINED THIS ENCOUNTER WAS ACCIDENTAL AND WAS UNCLASSIFIED

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IN CONJUNCTION WITH A VISIT TO A HIGH-CLASS PRISON TO INTERVIEW A FORMER AIR FORCE OFFICER AND CARLOS LAZO WHO HAD BEEN PRESIDENT OF THE CENTRAL BANK UNDER ALLENDE. THEY SAID CERRETTI HAD BEEN IN PRISON FOR ONE YEAR AND COMPLAINED HE HAD BEEN PAYING OFF CHILEAN LAWYERS WITH NO RESULTS. THE LAWYERS KEPT REPORTING BACK TO HIM THAT THE COURT DECISIONS WERE GOING AGAINST HIM. CERRETTI COMPLAINED THAT THE U.S. CONSUL REFUSED TO CHECK ON THE VERACITY OF THIS AND GENERALLY WHETHER THE LAWYERS WERE DOING A GOOD JOB IN HIS BEHALF. CODEL THOUGHT THE U.S. EMBASSY SHOULD DO MORE IN THIS REGARD.

11. THEY ADDED THEY HAD EXPRESSED THEIR CONCERN TO GENERAL LEIGH ABOUT NEWS OF AN UPCOMING NAVY TRIAL. THEY EXPRESSED THE VIEW TO LEIGH THAT THIS WOULD RESULT IN FURTHER BAD PUBLICITY ABROAD FOR CHILE. LEIGH REPORTEDLY SAID HE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE TRIAL.

12. FINALLY, WITH REGARD TO THE GOC ASSERTION THAT THEY ARE FIGHTING COMMUNISM, THEY WERE OF THE VIEW THAT THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH ON INTERNAL SECURITY IS MADE TO ORDER FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY. THEY BELIEVE THE

COMMUNISTS ARE QUITE HAPPY WITH THE EFFICIENT JOB THE
JUNTA HAS DONE IN DESTROYING THE ECONOMY, THE CONGRESS,
AND THE VOTING ROLES OF THE CHILEAN PEOPLE. KISSINGER

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